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All Things Considered: Hour 1

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Emanuel Calls For Increase To Gas Tax

Michael Puente (/staff/Michael+Puente)

December 11, 2018



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Chicago Mayor Rahm Emanuel stood with other regional mayors in calling for Illinois lawmakers to pass a statewide capital bill to pay for what he says are critical transportation infrastructure needs.

Emanuel said the state needs to increase the state's motor fuel tax by 20 to 30 cents to pay for those needs. The motor fuel tax of 19 cents per gallon has remained the same since 1990.

"We tried for 28 years as a state to starve our strength and it's not working for us. It's time to invest in our strength and have it really perform the way it should from an economic opportunity, job creator, and, also for all of us, as someone who also took the train this morning, for the quality of life for all of our residents," Emanuel said at a Tuesday morning press conference at City Hall.

Emanuel said the state hasn't passed a statewide capital bill since 2009. He said the Chicago region needs at least \$24 billion in added revenue through 2050 to maintain the current system, without addressing the backlog of needed infrastructure projects like roads, bridges, and transit systems.

"For Illinois to maintain its status as the transportation hub of the nation, we need to make major infrastructure investments to support our transportation systems," Emanuel said. "In addition to critical funding to replace aging roads and bridges, sustained, flexible revenues need to flow directly to public transit. As the backbone of our larger transportation network and a stimulator of economic development, transit needs a dedicated, reliable revenue source so that we can continue to modernize and grow the system."

According to the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning

(https://www.cityofchicago.org/city/en/depts/mayor/press_room/press_releases/2018/december/StatewideTransportationCapitalBill.html), the region needs another \$32 billion to improve conditions and expand the current roadway system.

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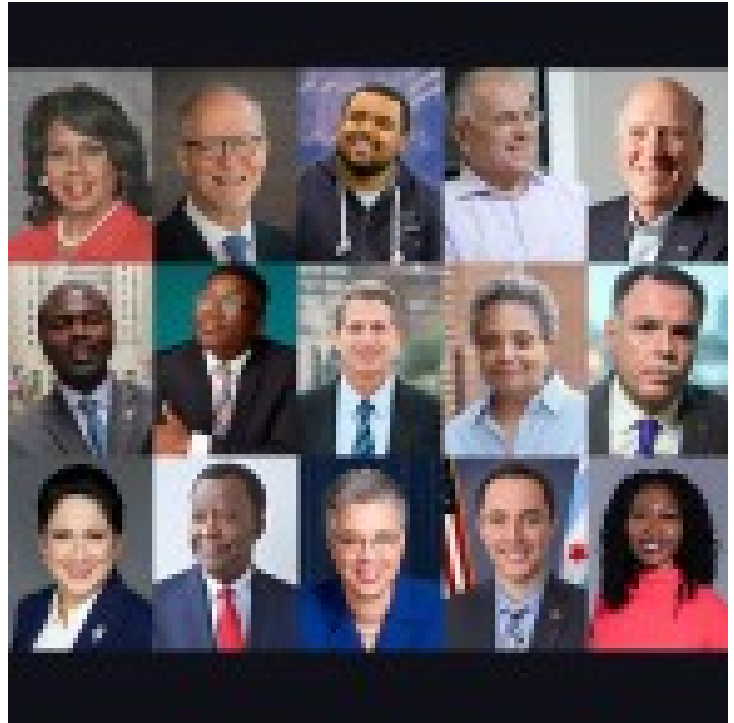
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